

FREDERICK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of Meeting for
November 17, 2021
Virtual & In-Person Meeting

See video for further meeting details: <http://frederickcountymd.gov/5956/Video-Archives>

Members Present: Sam Tressler, Chair; Craig Hicks, Vice-Chair; Carole Sepe; Michael Sowell.

Members Absent: Joel Rensberger, Secretary; Terry Bowie.

Staff Present: Kimberly Golden Brandt, Livable Frederick Director; Kathy Mitchell, Senior Assistant County Attorney; Denis Superczynski, Livable Frederick Planning Manager; Tim Goodfellow, Livable Frederick Environmental Planner and Karen James, Administrative Specialist

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Sam Tressler

2. ROLL CALL Sam Tressler

3. MINUTES TO APPROVE

Ms. Sepe asked for a revision to the agenda. Mr. Tressler continued with approval of the minutes for Oct. 20, 2021 – Mr. Sowell motioned to approve the minutes as submitted; Mr. Hicks, 2nd.

<u>VOTE</u>	<u>4-0-0-2</u>
FOR:	4 - Tressler, Hicks, Sepe, Sowell,
AGAINST:	0
ABSTAIN:	0
ABSENT:	2 – Rensberger, Bowie

Ms. Sepe asked to go into closed session for legal advice on a letter that had been received. Mr. Tressler said he felt it not appropriate or legal to do so without prior notice or being listed on the formal agenda. Ms. Mitchell said the Commission would be in violation of the Open Meetings Act if it did not comply with the requirements for holding a closed meeting. Ms. Sepe withheld further comment.

4. DRAFT SUGARLOAF TREASURED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Ms. Brandt provided an overview of the contents of the meeting packets, including recent letters and e-mails and supplemental comments received through November 15. She provided instructions to the public on how to listen and view at home, and comment or leave a recorded comment during the meeting. Mr. Tressler expressed his appreciation for the public's input.

Mr. Goodfellow continued his presentation from Nov. 10, reviewing Chapter 4 – Land Use. Included in the review were policies, initiatives, and mapping.

Mr. Hicks expressed concern that Stronghold, the owner of Sugarloaf Mountain, does not support some of the policies the plan proposes.

Ms. Brandt stated that staff has been in contact with Stronghold throughout the planning process, and that Stronghold is interested in the Planning Commission considering the proposed STR zoning district that Mr. Manalo (attorney for Stronghold) put forward. As an alternative, staff has proposed a new use – private park – that recognizes the existing park use and potential future accessory uses. The Planning Commission needs to consider both and ultimately decide how to proceed.

Mr. Goodfellow shared current land uses and proposed land uses. Several commissioners expressed their thoughts on the overlay. Mr. Sowell mentioned his concern regarding changing Agricultural zoning to Resource Conservation. Ms. Sepe felt the overlay would impact property values.

Ms. Sepe expressed her concern on the use of the word “prohibiting” in Policy 4.3 and suggested “limiting” in its place. The statement needs to be more definitive and say, “do not expand the rural residential land use designation into agricultural and natural resource areas.”

Ms. Sepe spoke out on the use of the word “morals” on page 31 and asked that it be removed.

A break was taken at 11:08 a.m. The meeting resumed at 11:15 a.m.

Mr. Goodfellow continued his presentation with Initiative 4F, adopt and apply the Sugarloaf Rural Heritage overlay zoning district. Ms. Sepe said she would not vote for this initiative until she figures out what the overlay zoning is going to be. Ms. Brandt asked if there is interest in moving forward with considering the overlay and identifying the changes needed to make it acceptable to the Commission, or if there a question about whether or not we should be considering an overlay at all. Mr. Hicks said the former should be discussed and considered, although appreciating Ms. Sepe’s statement.

Mr. Hicks said he could foresee the overlay being a topic of substantial conversation with stakeholders and land owners, and that they need a clearer understanding of what they are trying to achieve through the overlay. And, that they need to be prepared to receive and respond to a lot of input on this topic.

Discussion continued and Ms. Brandt noted that when the Planning Commission’s decision is made on the final recommended planning area boundary, staff will have to update tables to make sure they have captured land use and zoning for all properties included.

Ms. Sepe referenced a paragraph on page 42 specifically about Gordon Strong, and asked staff to take another look at it. Ms. Brandt suggested some of the problem may be that the language is included in the land use regulations section.

Mr. Sowell commented that the Land Conservation section is a good place to specifically describe the County’s success with the various local programs in terms of acres preserved. Ms. Sepe suggested rearranging the listing of the conservation programs so the federal programs appear first, then state, then local.

Mr. Hicks suggested reorganizing the chapter so the policies and the related initiatives are grouped together.

Mr. Goodfellow began the Chapter 5 presentation. Ms. Sepe suggested visuals be added.

Mr. Sowell suggested data showing how traffic has changed over the years. Discussion continued on where initiatives are placed in the draft plan, as well as the contents of Chapter 5. Ms. Sepe suggested revising Policy 5.2 to "serve the Urbana Community Growth Area" and not use the word "existing." Mr. Goodfellow agreed as the growth area could be changed by a future administration. He went on to describe current and planned interchanges in the area. There was discussion on the use of the term "future."

5. LUNCH BREAK 12:31-1:36

6. DRAFT SUGARLOAF TREASURED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The meeting reconvened with Mr. Goodfellow continuing the presentation of Chapter 5 and its initiatives. Mr. Hicks questioned use of the word "unique" in describing Doctor Perry Road on page 70. He further said that he was not suggesting that the road be excluded, but that a prominent view of the mountain did not strike him as a compelling criteria to include it because that is not a unique characteristic. Mr. Goodfellow responded that it could be removed. He also noted that the entire roadway has a clear view of the mountain. Mr. Goodfellow suggested perhaps the words "prominent view" be used.

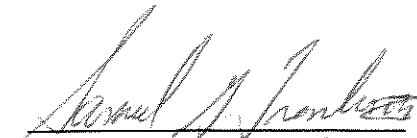
Ms. Sepe had questions about The I-495 and I-270 Managed Lanes Study text on pages 63 and 64. Mr. Goodfellow indicated that staff would need to revise and update this section to reflect more recent decisions.

Following more discussion, Ms. Brandt said staff would be prepared with slides for Chapters 6, 7, and 8 on December 8th.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT 2:13-2:42

Ms. Brandt offered instructions to the public for calling in and speaking live or leaving a recorded message. There were five callers.

Following discussion with callers and no additional public comment, Mr. Tressler asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Sowell made said motion, hearing no second, Mr. Tressler declared the meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.


Samuel G. Tressler III, Chair

11/12/22
Date